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Reappraise The Situation

The embittered, high-powered campaigning that marked the closing weeks of the presidential race largely drove from the headlines many a news story of long-pull significance — even as it diverted public attention from developments of top importance to the entire world. High on this list have been the course of the cold war and the status of the hot war in Korea.

Certain facts seem to be self-evident. First, the idea, which was hopefully held some time ago in various quarters, that the Soviet Union wished to come to some sort of reasonable terms with the United States, no longer has credence. It is clear that the only terms in which the Politburo is interested are those which would work 100 per cent to Russia's advantage. In his last major speech, before the U. N. General Assembly, Vyshinsky followed the standard Soviet line for well over an hour, accusing this country of practically every crime in the calendar, including the germ warfare charge, and the assertion that the Korean war was being deliberately prolonged so as to profit American billionaires who lust for blood money.

Second, current Soviet strategy has as its basic aim the splitting of the Western powers, to be followed ultimately by the isolation of the U. S. This certainly isn't a new technique, but the work is being intensified. Soviet officials are being very polite these days to certain of the Western nations — particularly those in which there are substantial anti-American blocs, and in which the governments are something less than stalwart in their allegiances. The officials are trying hard to sell the idea that Russia has no designs on these nations, and wants to be friends.

Third, Russia is going all out to strengthen and harden her agents and sympathizers in the West

ern countries, with special emphasis on the U. S. The American Communist party has in large part gone underground. It is reported that membership requirements have been greatly stiffened — no weak sisters are wanted. It is also reported that Russia's system of schooling her foreign agents is really in high gear. The curricula is an extensive one, including everything from propaganda techniques to how to sabotage industrial plants, power and rail systems, and other key installations.

Fourth, the problem of what to do about Communists in our government is more crucial than ever. The testimony of General Walter Bedell Smith, head of our top intelligence agency, in this regard was most revealing. General Smith, an extremely able officer who was Eisenhower's Chief of Staff during World War II and afterwards Ambassador to Russia, said that Communists had wormed their way into important places in his agency and elsewhere. Also revealing is the charge of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee that American Communists have gained key positions in the United Nations Secretariat.

Last, but certainly not least, it is clear that we are as far from a Korean truce as ever, and that the Kremlin will do everything possible to keep it going and to force us to spend material and manpower there in an endless stream.